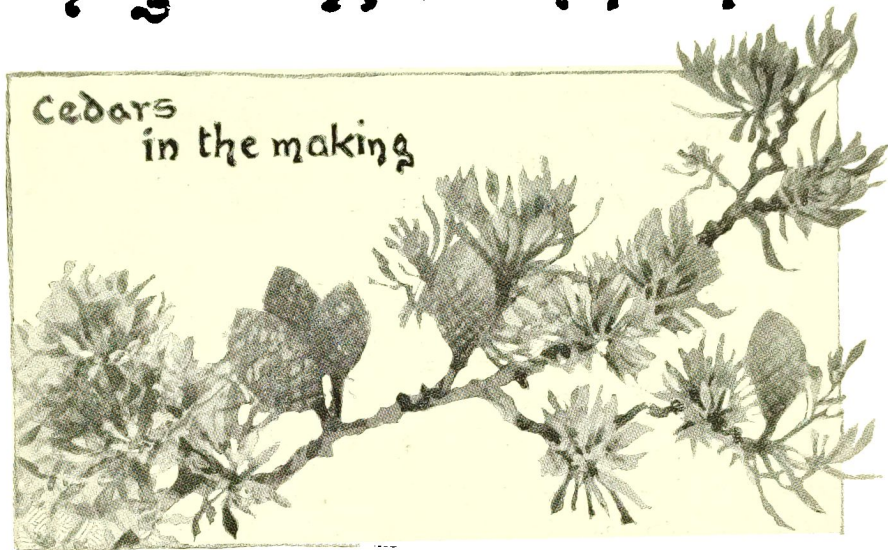


Algiers Mission Band



Story of 1924-25.

ALGIERS MISSION BAND.

Headquarters—Dar Naama, El Biar, Algiers. *Gen. Sec.*—I. Lilius Trotter.

ADVISORY COUNCIL IN ENGLAND.

Rev. Francis Brading, B.D.

Cecil Collinson.

J. G. Govan.

John Gordon Logan.

Rev. E. L. Hamilton.

Rev. Charles Inwood, D.D.

John L. Oliver.

Mrs. Brading, Hon. Sec. and Treasurer, 38, Outram Road, Croydon.

Cecil Collinson, Hon. Deputation Secretary.

REFEREES, AMERICA.

W. C. Pearce, W.S.S.A., Metropolitan Tower, New York.

Dr. S. D. Price, W.S.S.A., Metropolitan Tower, New York.

Chas. C. Trumbull, 1031, Walnut Street, Philadelphia.

Algerian Mission Band, America.

Mrs. J. A. Walker, Sec.,
2300, Dexter Street, Denver, Col.

Mrs. Goodrich, Treas.,
302, College Court, Mich.

REFEREES, FRANCE.

Pastor J. P. Cook

Secretaries for Prayer-helpers.

J. H. Smeeton

H. W. Buckenham

{ Dar Naama, El Biar,

{ Algiers, North Africa.

Miss F. K. Currie, General Treas., Oulad Sultane, Blida, Algeria.

CEDARS IN THE MAKING.

THE cedars are in a shallow tin box beside me; a box two inches long. Visibly it contains nothing but impalpable lemon-coloured powder. Potentially it is a forest that would cover all our mountain crests along the country side.

From one of those crests, where lies her newly opened out-post of Teniet, M. Grautoff brought down a little cedar branch the other day: dusky blue-green, with fawn coloured baby cones, so we thought, perched on it here and there.

Suddenly these seeming cones began sifting down pale gold dust, and a touch released it in a thick shower. They were really catkins, and were opening, and shedding pollen, and in three minutes the little box was half full.

Less than nothing for God's cedar building, yet any and every invisible speck so charged with indwelling life that it can start a miracle working the moment that the wind has carried it to the appointed place.

"The dust" and "the breath of life"; that was God's Eden-plan for man's beginning: "the Dust of Death" and "the Breath of Life" are our redemption-story: "the dust" of man's impotence and "the Breath" of the Spirit have been linked ever since in building up the new Creation.

So we ask you to pray for us out here, that we may be small enough, vitalized enough, for God's Service: and like the pollen, ready to spend and to be spent uncalculating, "if we may by all means save some" by bringing them His touch of life.

Again we have only space for the fresh points in the work where your prayer can send the Breath into our pollen-dust.

Algiers. This last year has brought a blow that looked at first as if it would mean the crumbling of the work of years. Our dear old fortress-like Mission House in the Arab town (2 Rue du Croissant) was suddenly sold over our heads. This meant that the present throng of boys and girls, successors of those who had gathered there in turn for 33 years, must be disbanded. Mr. Smeeton's blind pupils, whose numbers suddenly sprang last autumn from 4 or 5 to a regular attendance of 10, had no prospect of continuance, and the baby church that met in the crypt, was also homeless.

God came to our help, as is His wont. First of all, the faint hope of transferring the Sunday service to Dar Naama, grew to the certainty that He was in it, and the little gathering has not flagged, in spite of heat and a two-mile uphill walk. Then came the solution for the blind men; for the "Women's Foreign Missionary Society" of the Methodist Episcopal Church supplied our need of housing. First came the temporary loan of their gymnasium, then.

better still, their garage was granted, affording every chance for expansion and consolidation. It is being fitted with desks, etc., and gives space for an attendance of 24 scholars. The boys and girls are still a problem, so far as the Rue du Croissant group is concerned. *Beit Naama* is Mission property, and can go its way in peace, but it is in too far off a quarter, and already too crowded, to receive a fresh influx. *Belcourt*, which means Algiers' eastern suburb, is rapidly growing into a town, and the work is still starved for want of adequate help. It seems impossible for M. Walling to follow up all the openings for visiting among the houses that stand terraced, tier above tier, up the steep hillside, and to be free for the loving little lads and maidens who cluster round the door. Even an additional Arabic tongue (I. Nash) on one morning of the week, made possible an elementary "grading" that brought a warm response, and showed the chances that might be taken if more reinforcements were available.

Colea and its needs have been linked in, this last year, with those of Algiers, for the two have been interwoven, by part of Mr. Buckenham's time having been given to helping Mr. Smeeton with his large correspondence, and with his blind men. Notwithstanding this, and the claims on Mrs. Buckenham of a new baby-boy, the work has seen expansion by fresh space becoming available. This has released the girls from their cooped-up quarters (where their days had to be fitted in with those of the boys), into a room of their own. This is of course the source of pride and joy, to them and likewise to

the boys, who now have the quarters that were formerly shared, for their own domain.

“Added to this,” says Mr. Buckenham, “the doors of the place have markedly kept open to Mrs. Buckenham’s visiting,—‘He openeth and no man shutteth’—and there has been a peculiar heart-knitting with many among its leading families. Maybe deliverance will yet come to these Islam-bound souls by way of the heart, rather than by the head.”

Blida writes : “The year’s chief joy has been the renewing of old friendships—women and girls, who had gone to other places, or who for various reasons had been lost sight of, came back into touch in a really remarkable way, one after the other, and we had such a sense of God’s Hand upon them. Old girls, now mothers with their babes in arms, are beginning to come to the women’s meeting, and are so eager for the best for their children. Prayer is needed for this new generation, that from it may arise the Christian leaders for the future.”

Miliana, next out west, sends again the cry of shorthandedness, and opportunities lost beyond recall thereby, specially in the visiting.

On the other hand the year shows a growing point full of hope in the group of 7 or 8 Arab women who have met daily for morning prayer, one and another often taking part. Among the men, fresh advance has been made

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possible by the presence for several months of Salvador Lull, a young Spaniard whom we have known since boyhood, and who has now joined us on probation. He divided his time between language study and sharing with the Spanish Evangelist the working of a newly opened book Depot: a new centre this, on its Arabic side, for bringing life and power to bear on the reading natives of the country around. And at the boys' classes in the Mission House, Monsieur Lull won a ready hearing, and many friends among the little lads.

In **Relizane** the working season in its ordinary sense was a very short one; M. Ridley was recalled by home needs for the spring months, and Tlemcen claimed much of K. Butler's time. The early weeks were very blessed ones, in prayer power released there.

The testing time of the break brought manifest answer. A native girl helper threw herself into the breach by holding on the classes among the small girls, and a shy, half blind Spanish lad, in whom the light of life had been brought to kindling point of late, came forward, loyally and bravely, in keeping together the 40 or 50 Arab boys. And between the two of them, the spring report shews no flagging. There is much of future promise enfolded in these twin buds.

At **Mascara** the best bits of advance have been, not so much in the tough town itself, as in the country round, where Monsieur Soler has had remarkable colportage sales, and invitations have been given to F. Hammon from well-to-do

Arabs, to come and stay with them and tell them what she has to tell. All this is a part of the silent signs of God's preparation work, of which we hear on all sides in the Moslem World.

Mostaganem has been joining hands with Tlemcen in the person of Mademoiselle Gayral, who has given invaluable help in the fresh advance there. This has been, of course, to the loss of her own work, but we look to see the promise fulfilled, "There is that scattereth and yet increaseth," and already its dawn is on the horizon even outwardly. Inwardly there is joy over two or three women souls "illuminated" who have needed special tending whenever it could be given.

Away, as far on the other side of Algiers, lies our nearest desert post of **Tolga**. This year's story shall be told by V. Wood. "The outside world as seen on most sides of Tolga is dry, dead, stony and hopeless looking: query, "is it a true picture of the prospects of mission work there? visiting so often "shews friendliness to ourselves but indifference or dislike to our message.

"But a walk on Easter Day gave another picture: ground still stony and "dry, but now and again delicate little heavenly-blue irises and other flowers "shew life springing even here.

"So there are exceptions: little children who love Bible tales, specially of "the Good Shepherd and His lambs; women who really listen and boys who "if not forbidden to come, are eager for stories. One lovely little flower—met

“ with in a distant village—a girl who listened with real tears of joy in her eyes
“ to the hymns learnt as a child in Algiers and never quite forgotten.

“ It was spring when we left Tolga. The ivory-white clusters of date
“ flowers and brilliant red pomegranate blossom in the oasis gave promise of
“ glorious fruitage. May we look on every scrap of real listening and even on
“ the love shewn to ourselves, as flowers yet to bear fruit, by God’s wonderful
“ love and power ?”

Another 3 or 4 days’ travelling, whichever route we choose, brings us to

Tozeur, and yet another 2 days to its outpost **Monastir** on the Tunisian shore. Monastir had short measure this year : that again is a tough place, but for the ever-eager boy-hearts.

In Tozeur again, boys were the focus-point, and the long-dreamed dream of A. Krebs concerning a club for them, grew into being under Mr. Theobald’s care. Its members gathered untiringly 5 nights a week, for lecture, microscope, cartoscope or games as the case might be, all unknowing how their character and their ways (even as revealed in their native games) were being studied with a view to drawing in the net for Christ. The women and girls shewed a new fearlessness in coming to the Mission House, and welcoming return visits. This, after years of aloofness on their side, is no small advance.

Here ends the year’s story of the places where your prayer-help has worked alongside us in the past. But there are new pollengrains, so to speak, getting

ready for the next season, in fresh opportunities needing the vitalizing prayer-breath. They all came into sight in the first 4 months of the year.

They began with **Tlemcen**, for long an objective on Relizane's horizon. K. Butler tells the spring's story—

“ ‘In the beginning, God.’ It is only of the beginnings at Tlemcen that we can write, but the beginnings have assured us that He Who hath begun will perfect that for which He called us there. Since our last Report was issued He shewed us the site for the Mission House, made the purchase possible, overcame countless difficulties that confronted us, and provided the necessary funds for the building. So now, as we see it nearly ready for occupation, we can say ‘His Name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor.’ For all that the settling in will mean in that fanatical town, we look to Him to give us wisdom, and you we ask to strengthen our hands by your prayers.”

Then, at the very time when the Rue du Croissant doors closed behind us, came the offer of help in opening a station in **Bousaada**, a place of palms and houses of sun-dried bricks, often visited before. It has sprung into sudden importance by a new motor service, that links Algiers with Tolga in 12 hours across country instead of the old detour of 3 days rail; and Bousaada is the half-way halt, as well as being an exceptional centre in other directions. The house is awaiting the return of A. McIlroy and Mlle. Butticz for opening work there.

With the same suddenness, fresh prospects opened for **Dellys**, on the coast. This came through the ever intensifying sense of the need of facing practically the Shelter question, though the first attempt is on a scale that seems only to mock its vastness. Its focus point, to us, lies in having a place of refuge for the young lives, "les jeunes divorcees," the French would call them, who are tossed hither and thither through the land without a harbour, till terribly often, they are engulfed while still in their teens. A house was found in Dellys for a tiny beginning, and we hope the initial steps will be over, and its doors open to the first 2 or 3 inmates, by the new year. It is M. Farmer and I. Sheach who ask your prayers for this new venture, to which both feel God's call.

Lastly, in the new horizons of the year, came a tournee in the mountains, taken by Mr. Buckenham and Mr. Theobald, which confirmed the hopes of the latter that the time has come for systematic colportage and evangelization through the land. S. Lull is keen to follow the lead, and with the early summer came the first gifts towards a motor van, that will bring the long stretches of the untouched interior into possibility of reach.

Take all these new visions into fellowship with the heart of Christ over their outcome.

Alongside these developments, the early months of the year brought a very important step as regards our future as a Band. Long investigation had proved that a Government status out here could not be obtained without crippling

us. The alternative was to seek a status in England such as would give consolidation and stability for the time to come.

Our friends of over 30 years standing—the Rev. F. C. and Mrs. Brading—fellow-workers out here with us in our early days, came to our help with a warmth that touched us greatly: and the second page of the cover shews the outworking. The rest of spirit that this base at home means to us all, can only be judged by those who know the “exercise” of heart and mind over the question of the future. Now, in God’s good time and by the good help of those who are banded on our behalf at home, we have come, we believe, to the solution, with praise and thanksgiving.

Never have we felt so keenly our limitations and our disabilities. But we go back once more to the pollen-powder: dust and breath—that is all that God needs: literally and emphatically *all*. Will you pray that He will bring us low enough and make us living enough to be vehicles for “the working of His mighty power.”

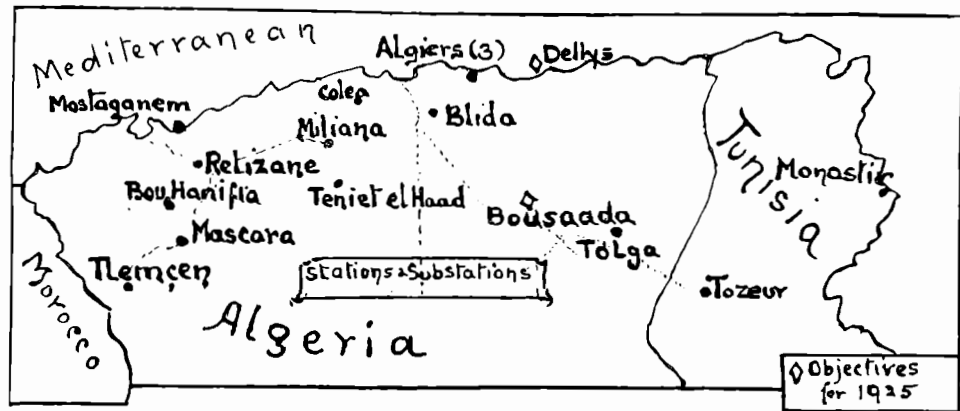


LOCATION OF WORKERS. Winter, 1924-25.

Dates of arrival.	<i>Stations and dates of opening.</i>
	Dar Naama, El Biar, Algiers, 1908
1888	I. Lilas Trotter
1890	F. Helen Freeman
1906	Sascha E. Perkin
1911	Ida Nash
1919	} Mons. and Mme. P. Nicoud
1922	
1922	Alice Kemp
	2 Rue du Croissant, Algiers
1909	Alice McIlroy
1912	Mr. Smeeton
1919	Augusta Butticaaz
1922	Isabella Sheach (Short Service)
	Beit Naama, Algiers, 1909
1914	Augusta M. Farmer
	Belcourt, Algiers, 1921
1909	M. Mary Watling
	Blida, 1908
1909	Fanny K. Currie
1909	Millicent H. Roche
	Colea, 1923
1920	Mr. and Mrs. Buckenham

Dates of arrival.	<i>Stations and dates of opening.</i>
	Miliana, 1909
	<i>Sub-station—Teniet</i>
1907	Mabel D. Grautoff
	M. Helen Drysdale (Short Service)
1924	Salvador Lull
	Relizane, 1909
1907	E. R. May Ridley
1916	Kathleen Butler
	Mascara, 1912
	<i>Sub-station—Bou Hanifia</i>
1912	Senor and Sen. Soler
1912	Fanny Hammon (Mission Helper)
	Mostaganem, 1917
1906	Alexandrine Gayral
	Tozeur, 1913—Monastir, 1917
1921	Mr. and Mrs. Theobald
1920	Violet Wood
	Tolga, 1923
1920	Violet Wood
1914	Augusta M. Farmer

Algiers Mission Band.



Sketch Map Algeria & Tunisia